Promotion of tourism in India

†2461. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has provided some incentives to the tourists of certain countries with a view to promote tourism in India;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the names of such countries in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) No specific incentives have been provided to the tourists of any country. However, the facility of long-term multiple entry tourist visas of five year duration has been introduced for the nationals of 18 countries. The names of these countries are, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Belgium, Finland, Spain, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, New Zealand, Japan, South Korea, Argentina, Brazil, Chili, Mexico and Vietnam. This long-term visa would carry stay stipulation of 90 days on each visit.

Earn-while-you-learn scheme in tourism sector

2462. MS. MABEL REBELLO:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Centre has launched "earn-while-you-learn scheme" in tourism sector, to encourage students to take up part-time jobs;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the students would be imparted the requisite training for the purpose; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The scheme titled "Earn while you learn" is a short term training program of 21 days to encourage youth to work as student volunteers in tourism industry.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The training covers the heritage of India, an over view of Tourism Travel and Hospitality Industry besides Managerial and Behavioral skills.

Foreign tourists visiting India

2463. SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE:
SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has been promoting tourism and the number of foreign tourists have increased over four million during the previous year, compared to 2.2 million five years ago;

(b) if so, whether the foreign exchange earned last year was to the tune of $5.5 billion compared to $3 billion in 2002;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.